



February 8, 2018

On January 18th the Idaho Statesman ran a story about the 7,000 plus high wage math and science jobs in Idaho that are unfilled because we don't have the labor force to fill them. Every year we hear our political and business leaders say we need to make the state more attractive to businesses with a more skilled and better educated labor force. The STEM diploma is a huge step in the right direction.

The STEM diploma shows schools and students that the state recognizes and holds in high regard those who do more than the minimum by putting up a goal to which ALL Idaho students who want can aspire. In recent years, we have been so focused on graduation rates that we have forgotten to focus whether the skills they are graduating with will do them any good.

The number of students receiving STEM diplomas will increase every year because it shows a tangible goal for students, parents, and guidance counselors. This will be good data to track going forward as to how students that have a STEM diploma fair in college and the workforce as compared to their non-STEM peers.

Our seniors at North Idaho STEM Charter Academy have an average SAT score that is 200 points above the national average and 300 points above the state average. Why? Because we have a higher standard, and it shows in our graduates.

This increase in the quality of our high school graduates has no fiscal impact on the general fund. What have you got to lose??

- Please show businesses that Idaho is serious about providing a workforce worth investing in.
- Please provide students with a roadmap that will help them be more successful in college, thus helping to meet our 60% goal.
- Please show students, parents, teachers, and businesses that we are as serious about the quality of our graduates as we are about the quantity of them.
- Please vote to send **Senate Bill 1267** to the floor with a "Do Pass" recommendation.

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STEM Charter Academy
A Free K-12 Public School of Choice

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